

Preventive (Health) Maintenance

By Jim Heyen, Wastewater Tech

Many of you believe immunizations are just for children, but you could be dead wrong! How many of you were born before 1957? You may not have received all the recommended immunizations.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that the general public, including all wastewater treatment plant operators and others working within wastewater treatment plants, be up-to-date on their immunization for diphtheria and tetanus. Booster shots are recommended every 20 years after the initial immunizations are administered. The tetanus booster needs to be repeated if a wound or puncture becomes dirty and a booster shot has not been received within 5 years.

At the present time, no additional immunizations above those recommended by the U.S. Public Health Service for adults in the general population are advised for workers in contact with wastewater. The Table below summarizes the immunizations recommended by the U.S. Public Health Service.

The preventive effect of the vaccine immune serum globulin for hepatitis A is short-lived (about 3 weeks), and is not routinely recommended for wastewater workers unless there has been a direct exposure to wastewater splashed into an open wound or the mouth or a severe outbreak has occurred in the community. The hepatitis B vaccination is not typically recommended for wastewater workers because the risk of transmission by wastewater is extremely remote.

Immunizations Recommended by the U.S. Public Health Service

<u>Disease</u>	<u>Who Needs Immunization</u>	<u>Immunization</u>
Hepatitis A	Individuals with close personal contact with hepatitis A	Hepatitis A globulin treatment
Hepatitis B	Homosexual males, household and sexual contact with carriers, and those who have direct exposure to blood of a known carrier or suspected to be a carrier	Hepatitis B immune globulin treatment with hepatitis B vaccine
Influenza	Adults 65 years and older*	Annual influenza vaccine
Measles	Adults born in 1957 or later, unless they have evidence of vaccination on or after first birthday, documentation of physician diagnosed disease, or laboratory evidence of the disease	Combined measles, mumps, and rubella vaccine (MMR)

Mumps	Adults, especially males, who have not been previously infected	Mumps vaccine
Pneumococcal disease	Adults 65 years or older	Pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine
Rubella	Women of childbearing age, unless proof of vaccination or laboratory evidence of immunity is available	Rubella vaccine
Tetanus and diphtheria	Adults every 10 years after initial dose and after wounds, unless it has been 5 years since last dose	TD Vaccine

*In general, anyone who wants to reduce their chances of getting influenza can get vaccinated, CDC says.

*Adapted from **Biological Hazards at Wastewater Treatment Facilities**, published by the Water Environment Federation (Alexandra, VA.)*